

THE NATIONAL *Falcon* NEWS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE FALCON CLUB OF AMERICA

SECOND QUARTER 2023



ON THE COVER

Jeff Schira (FCA #6235) and Phillip Nelson (FCA #14354) have certainly whet my appetite for warmer weather. With the top down on the '64 convertible and the surf board perched on top of Phil's '63 Squire Wagon, it sure makes me ready to catch some rays and ride some waves. Okay, I'm just kidding about the surfing, but a trip to the beach does sound pretty good right now.

If you have a cover-worthy photo of your Falcon, we'd love to show it off for you. That is cover-worthy, not award-worthy. We love ALL Falcons, show stoppers, daily drivers, and even those needing some extra love and attention. Please send those photos (8" wide at 300 dpi) to us at editor@falconclub.com. You can display your cover at your next car show; if that issue is an on-line version, we can provide you with a digital print-ready pdf or jpg of the cover to have printed for display.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 1, 2023

All Texas Falcon Picnic
Pavilion B, Miller Park (1919 N 1st St)
Temple, Texas

APRIL 15, 2023

Le Bon Temps Regional
Prairieville, Louisiana
Hosted by Le Bon Temps Chapter

JULY 13-15, 2023

2023 National Meet
Overland Park, Kansas
Register online at falconclub.com

AUGUST 18-19, 2023

Northeast Chapter FCA Regional
The Publick House Historic Inn
Sturbridge, Massachusetts

IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

The monthly online magazine on the website at falconclub.com is password protected and you must enter, when requested, your own password. For inquiries or updates regarding your FCA membership—your address, email, phone number, etc.—please contact membership@falconclub.com. To place a classified ad, send FCA Regional event information or articles, email editor@falconclub.com. For help with the website, email fcatechline@gmail.com.

THE FALCON CLUB OF AMERICA, INC. is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the Falcon automobile built by the Ford Motor Company from 1960 to 1970. The FCA was founded by Roy Sword in 1979 and is incorporated under Arkansas state law. Yearly dues to The Falcon Club of America are \$30. (\$35 for Western Hemisphere, \$45 for international members offshore, payable in U.S. funds) and are payable to: The Falcon Club of America, P.O. Box 113, Jacksonville, AR 72078-0113. The National Falcon News is published monthly with information submitted by members.



JIM GUTHRIE
FCA PRESIDENT

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring is here at last. The garage is warming up and there is much to do to be ready for the coming car shows, cruises and of course, our regional and national meets. It is not too late to make your reservations and register for the Bon Temps Regional in Gonzales, Louisiana, April 14–15, so don't wait. We will have information on additional regional meets very soon.

On-line registration for the 2023 National Meet will end on June 1. At that time we must notify the hotel as to the number of awards banquet attendees and get our last shirt order in to the printer. The Mid America Chapter will take orders for shirts from those who may not be coming to the National for \$22.00 plus \$10.00 shipping. You may order by check and mail to Colleen Ellis. Be sure to include size information.

The host hotel is almost sold out. We may be able to secure more rooms but there are no guarantees. Please make your reservations as soon as possible. The Lady's Tea has been sold out for quite some time. If you would like to be on the stand-by list, contact Jan Guthrie by phone or e-mail.

We will have a Schedule of Events available after publication of this edition of the Falcon News. Look for it online at about April 4th.

In other business, we are looking for a Chapter Coordinator to replace Mary Wagner. If you have any interest please let Mary or me know.

If your chapter is planning an event, we would like to help you get the word out. Contact our News Editor Janet Wilkerson or me and tell us what, where, and when. We want to help you make your event a success.

Time to go wash and wax that Futura, Sprint, Ranchero, Sport, Sport Coupe, Club Wagon, Sedan Delivery, or Deluxe, grab the family and hit the road. 2023 promises to be a great year but it can only happen with your participation. Be safe and stay well.

See you soon,

Jim Guthrie (FCA #12897)
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816-288-7469

Chapter Corner...



Sonoma County Falcons and Friends Picnic

The Sonoma County Falcons for Fun Chapter hosted a picnic on September 11, 2022. The picnic was held at beautiful Stafford Lake Park near Novato, California. Several Falcon owners and friends attended the picnic and brought their beautiful Falcons.

The chapter served up hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, and beans, and there was a variety of salads and desserts that attendees brought to the event. The weather was beautiful as it followed a severe heat wave the week before.

Everybody seemed to have a good time. New friends were made, and old friendships were rekindled as it had been awhile since people had seen each other. The Sonoma County Falcons are already making plans for another event next year!





Ford's entry in the new compact class, the Falcon, got off to a terrific start in 1960. Things got even better in '61 when the first of the sporty, bucket-seat Futuras joined the lineup. Counting commercial models, Falcon production approached half a million cars that year. (Owners: Paul and Julie Gelinis)*



Collectible Automobile, April 2002

1960-65 Ford Falcon: Dearborn's Straightforward Answer

As the Sixties dawned and American motorists were becoming more interested in small imported cars, the biggest U.S. manufacturers were ready to weigh in with their own compacts. Ironically, the most “American” of them had the most success.

by Phil Skinner

October 3, 1959, was a momentous day for the Ford Motor Company. An all-new, really new automobile was about to be unveiled. It was the type of car that late company founder Henry Ford might have been very proud of, for it brought to market many of the concepts he had envisioned with his Model T a half-century earlier. The car was of a relatively new class on the American scene known as the compact. It was named Falcon.

In autumn 1959, the Ford Falcon was one of three new compacts to be introduced by the U.S. “Big Three” automakers. After several marketing blunders in the Fifties, most notably the Edsel, those who worked in the “Glass House” at Ford’s World Headquarters in Dearborn, Michigan, were keeping their fingers crossed. By the end of the model year, Falcon was the winner of the sales race in the new category by a large margin.

By the mid Fifties, European imports proved to be a growing segment of the American new-car market. At the head of the pack was Germany’s Volkswagen (CA, February 1998). Developed before World War II to be the German “people’s car,” its basic design had proven popular and dependable. The VW’s success lured other European imports to America’s shores, though in very limited numbers. Individually, these cars caused little concern for the U.S. automakers, but collectively they were recognized as a sales threat to be reckoned with.

In addition to the Europeans, compact entries from America’s “Little Two” were also gaining momentum in the sales race. American Motors’ Rambler had been reborn in 1956 and was finding a strong customer base with unitized construction, ample power, and dependability. The case of the American small car was further advanced in 1959 via the new

**EDITOR NOTE: It should be noted that all references to owners apply to 2002, the year this original article was published. Current ownership is unknown.*



1,2. Early sketches for Ford's small-car program in late 1957 tried on Thunderbird and Edsel themes. 3. An undated early clay of the "Thunderbird XK" as the Falcon was at first known. 4. From Ford's advanced studios came a small-car concept called the Astrion. 5. Styling vice president George Walker poses with L'Avion, another advanced design rumored for a time to be Ford's "new small car." 6. By October '58, the true design was solidifying. 7. Quad headlights were considered, then rejected. 8. This clay's 'Bird-like roof' would ultimately resurface.

Studebaker Lark which in its initial year helped put its manufacturer in the black after years of being awash in red ink.

Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors were not going to sit idly by as the profits from others' little cars continued to grow. GM put Chevrolet at the head of its compact-car marketing plans with the Corvair, which was as close to being an American VW as it could be with its rear-mounted, air-cooled engine, rear swing-axle suspension, and limited body styles. It was an impressive bit of engineering, but its unconventional features (to American buyers) left some members of the public leery about these unique vehicles.

Over at Chrysler, the new Valiant—even-ually to be marketed as a Plymouth—was being prepared. Its strength was said to be its European-influenced styling with sweeping side-contour lines, an impressive trapezoidal grille opening, canted taillights, and rooflines that predicted future Chrysler products. Underhood sat a new and very well-engineered inline six-cylinder engine mounted at a 30-degree angle; it produced 101 bhp in standard form, which would make it the most powerful of the new Big Three compacts.

In the fall of 1957, Ford Motor Company was embroiled in its biggest failure ever, the Edsel. Several years earlier, when it was proposed to create a new marque, medium-priced cars were the fastest-growing market segment and an area where Ford felt it was vulnerable to the competition. However, by the time the Edsel started reaching showrooms, the combination of economic recession and poor initial production quality quickly left an irreparable scar on the new make's reputation.

At the time of the Edsel's release, Robert S. McNamara was vice president of Ford's North American vehicle operations. From the start, he was strongly opposed to the Edsel, believing it would steal customers and resources from the Ford Division, which he had seen become the most profitable arm in the growing company. Using his pragmatic, no-nonsense reputation, he claimed to always be looking to the "bottom line" as his guide for success. As much as McNamara



1.2. Following the 1960 Falcon's release, more than 193,000 of the price-leader two-door sedans were built. Bright side-window trim cost extra. 3.4. The interior was fitted with cloth-and-vinyl upholstery and a twin-cove dashboard. 5. The new 144-cid six-cylinder engine made 90 bhp. (Owner: Bob McGarvey) 6. At \$1974 to start, the Falcon four-door sedan was only slightly less popular than the two-door. (Owner: Maurice White) 7. Wagon choices started with this two-door model. 8. The two-door wagon body spawned the Falcon Ranchero pickup.

was against the Edsel, he was the biggest proponent of a truly new Ford compact when the idea was first put on the table.

This was not the first time Ford had looked into making a compact car. Attempts in the late Forties and early Fifties had been shelved when it was found to be financially unfeasible to produce such a vehicle. The push for the Falcon was done only after the European compacts started to show solid growth, which was about the same time that the Rambler American, a slightly updated revival of the

two-door 1950-55 Nash Rambler was put on the market and helped spur Rambler to sales gains in recessionary 1958 while most every other brand was slumping. Many of the European cars relied on four-cylinder engines while the little 100-inch-wheelbase Rambler used an inline six. Most European cars were suited for four passengers, while the American was able to seat six. When Ford product planners sat down to consider building a compact—engine size and passenger capacity were the first two concerns to be addressed.

This new small car was targeted to have a price tag well under the \$2000 mark, or about 20 percent less than a full size Ford sedan. Planning and marketing worked long and hard to come up with a basic package, depending on public input. Thousands of hours were dedicated to conducting and studying opinion polls, in addition to long months of research and planning.

Even the model lineup was jockeyed back and forth. At one point, a full complement of models including hardtop sedans, convertibles,

and station wagons was suggested. At another stage, the new car was to be offered only as a two-door sedan before more consideration led to the decision to offer both two- and four-door sedans. In time, two- and four-door station wagons were deemed necessary; then, finally, a compact pickup.

Coming up with a new name for the car was another major project. During the development, the code name "Thunderbird XK" was used. (This gave rise to rumors that a two-seat T-Bird was about to be reborn). The previous time Ford introduced a new make, more than 10,000 names were assembled before it was decided to call it the Edsel, (a name not even on the list.) For the new compact, the Falcon was on the list, and was eventually unanimously approved by those at the top.

Mounted on a wheelbase of 109.5 inches, total length of sedans was

just 181.2 inches, while the wagons stretched out to 189. The Falcon was just 70.3 inches wide—nearly a foot narrower than a standard-size Ford—and stood 54.5 inches high. Curb weight was kept as low as possible, topping out at 2422 pounds, just 22 pounds over the package target.

Falcon's body and chassis employed "Single-Unit" construction, and had been engineered to provide maximum strength with minimal weight. Surprisingly, the new compact car was solid and relatively quiet. Although the frame as considered part of the body, its design was sturdy and rugged. Using two box-section outer rails held together with five complete cross members and two partial rails, a solid base for the body was established. The rocker panels and all of the main structural underbody members, such as the floor side members and front side-member extensions, were galvanized and zinc-coated prior

to being assembled to inhibit rust. Underbody sheetmetal was developed so it would not be as likely to collect dirt and water. Falcon's body panels were designed to fit with close tolerances which helped keep out wind, weather, and noise.

A totally new engine was a part of the Falcon project. An ohv inline six, it used a bore of 3.5 inches with a 2.5-inch stroke for a total displacement of 144 cubic inches. With a compression ratio of 8.7:1, this little six was rated for 90 bhp at 4200 rpm, and delivered peak torque of 138 pound-feet at 2000 rpm. Equipped with a single-barrel Holley carburetor, gas mileage was touted to be in the range of a little under 30 miles per gallon for city driving and a little over 30 for highway cruising.

The new "Falcon Six" was the first Ford Motor Company product to use the "thin-wall" casting method. It employed a specially designed

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integral cylinder head and intake manifold—which made for easier servicing—and provided a series of tight-seal induction passages. For better fuel distribution, the intake manifold used a six-port design, which was a breakthrough for its time. Fully equipped, the little six tipped the scales at just under 350 pounds, making it about 150 pounds lighter than the full-size Ford “Mileage-Maker Six.”

There was a choice of two transmissions. Included in the base price was a sturdy three-speed manual with second and third-gear synchronizers. Optional was the Falcon Fordomatic, a two-speed unit that was air-cooled to reduce weight. Both were available with a 3.10:1 rear axle that provided plenty of power and economy in either case. The Falcon’s steering and suspension were very different from the full-size Ford models. A major difference up front was the

mounting of the shock absorber. The rubber-insulated top mounting point was placed in the shock tower, an integral part of the unibody structure, while the lower mount was attached to the upper A-arm. A four-inch coil spring surrounded the shock absorber, and was inclined seven degrees to help reduce brake dive. A flanged lower control arm and stabilizing strut combined to give the car better support and less bounce on the road. The upper ball joints were spring loaded to compensate for wear, while the lower ball joints had thrust bearings, which combined with the recirculating ball steering for smoother and easier maneuvering of the car.

A proven design was adopted for the rear suspension. Five-leaf semi-elliptic springs located in an asymmetrical pattern and hydraulic shock absorbers gave the Falcon a relatively smooth ride. Tires were four-ply

nylon 6.00X13s. While the internal envelope of the Falcon was where most of the developmental funds were aimed, the outward appearance was what would ultimately attract the buying public. Charged with the task of making the new compact appeal to a style-conscious public was Eugene Bordinat, Jr. Though relatively new at Ford, his background in Detroit started with General Motors, where he had been employed since 1938. One of his first projects at Ford was the new compact. Basically, Bordinat’s job was to keep the car simple and under budget—two of McNamara’s favorite themes.

Several design ideas were explored, seeing the creation of such vehicles as the I.Avion and Astrion concept cars. A two-seat Thunderbird-like vehicle was even created with photos “leaked” out to throw the competition off balance. In total, more than 20 proposals were presented for the

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1.2. The most visible general change to 1961 Falcons was a shift to a convex grille, but the new Futura added its own wheelcovers and rear-fender trim. 3.4. The Futura's all-vinyl bucket seats folded especially flat to ease rear-seat entry. 5. There was more pep, too: an available 101-bhp 170-cid six. (Owners: Paul and Julie Gelinis) 6. A sedan delivery joined the Ranchero in the commercial line for '61. (Owner: Ken Hustvet) 7.8. The Deluxe interior, wheel covers, and 170-cube engine could be ordered for the Ranchero. (Owner: Ken Hustvet) 9. For 1962, the Deluxe became a sub-model. A two-door sedan cost \$2071. (Owner: Brian Gatzow)



Falcon project. Some of the ideas eventually made their way to other Ford products.

Many of the proposals strayed from the original theme of simple and basic. However, Bordinat was able to successfully translate McNamara's wishes, and came up with a very attractive presentation.

The frontal view featured two single headlamps mounted inside a wide, soft-edged surround filled in with a stamped aluminum grille produced for Ford by Alcoa. Quad-headlight arrangement had been suggested for the Falcon, but preliminary presentations gave the car an uneven look. Not only did the use of the two-light front end lend to a cleaner appearance, it was also a cost-cutting move. Another feature that saved money (and weight) was a hood support rod attached to the radiator support instead of spring-equipped hinges.

Falcon's rear view featured a pair of large round taillights in keeping with what had become a recognized Ford design theme. (Ironically, 1960 full-size Fords departed from the round taillight theme, which may have contributed to sales being off that year) Falcon's side view was simple, featuring an indented cove which started on the front fender and ran the length of the car, trailing off to accentuate the shape of the taillight tunnels. Doors and panels were relatively thin, and ornamentation was also kept to a minimum: stainless steel trim around the windshield and rear glass, chrome block letters spelling out "Ford" on the hood, and a series script on the front fenders behind the wheel well and again on the back panel. Eight standard exterior colors were used, all of them shared with the big Fords. Optional two-tone choices

were limited to contrasting roof/body patterns.

Inside, passengers enjoyed nearly the same amount of room as in the 1952-54 Fords.

Upholstery consisted of Moroccan-grain vinyl bolsters and stylish nylon cloth inserts. Interiors were equipped with standard front-door armrests and black "Sof-Tred" rubber carpeting. A neatly styled dashboard housed all instruments in a cluster directly in front of the driver. The sweeptype speedometer was large and could be easily viewed through the steering wheel. It was flanked on the left by the fuel gauge and on the right by the temperature indicator. Oil pressure and generator charging status was indicated by red warning lights on either side of the odometer. The parking brake was operated by means of a T-handle to the left of the driver.

Falcon wagons were really quite advanced in their design. While full-size Ford wagons still used a two-piece tailgate, Falcon haulers featured a rear window that could be retracted into the tailgate. (For those who had a few extra dollars to spend, this could be power operated.) Offering up to 76.2 cubic feet of space, the



Ventlike front-fender decorations and midbody side spears identified Futuras in 1962. At introduction time, they still had the wraparound rear window and "drilled" wheel covers from the '61s. Midway through the model year, the Futura picked up a revised roof (with available vinyl covering) and new-design wheel covers.

wagon had plenty of cargo room for most family loads. With a little bit of jockeying and the tailgate left down, a four-by-eight sheet of plywood could be loaded into the car.

For 1960, Falcon offered a limited number of options. A transistorized radio was available, as was a fresh-air heater and defroster with two-speed motor. A Deluxe trim package provided bright trim around the side windows, a choice of three interior colors, and a white steering wheel with a full horn ring. Ford was still promoting safety in its products, with Falcon having an optional padded dash and sun visors. Seat belts were available, too. Not available were such power conveniences as assisted brakes, steering, seats, or windows.

(page 14) There was lots new for Falcon in 1963. Convertibles were added to the Futura lineup at the start of the year. At midseason, hard-top coupes and V-8 power arrived. 1.2. The addition of sexier body styles and V-8 availability culminated in the sporty Sprint. It cost \$2837 as a convertible, \$234 more than its hardtop companion. 3. The Sprint interior included a standard sport steering wheel and dashtop tachometer. (Owners: Rob and Leslie Paino). (page 15) 4.5. The next best thing to a Sprint ragtop would have been a Futura Sports convertible with its buckets and console interior, wire wheelcovers, and optional 260-cid V-8. (Owner: Larry Wood) 6. Just 4269 Deluxe two-door wagons were made for '63. 7. A four-door sedan was new to the Futura line. With 31,736 built, it was the most popular member of its vastly enlarged series.



(Even back-up lights were not offered in Falcon's first season.) Typical dealer-added accessories included floor mats, license plate frames, exterior mirrors, seat covers, and heavy-duty suspension components.

When the Falcon first went on sale, only sedans were released. Finishing touches were applied to the station wagons before they hit the market in mid December. The car-based Ranchero package was repositioned into the Falcon family, and was marketed by the truck division as a light-duty commercial vehicle. Prices ranged from \$1912 for the base two-door sedan, up to \$2287 for the fourdoor station wagon. The Ranchero started at \$1862.

Ford Planners envisioned annual production of around 650,000 units. Production kicked off at the recently

completed Lorain, Ohio, plant and the revamped Kansas City, Missouri, facility. In early January 1960, the Milpitas, California, plant (often referred to as San Jose), started to mix Falcons with full-size cars; within a couple months, it would be exclusively Falcon. The factory at Metuchen, New Jersey, was another that switched from Galaxies and Fairlanes to Falcons early in 1960.

While the first year didn't reach the projected 650,000 mark (nor would it ever), it did lay the groundwork for better things to come. A total of 435,676 Falcon passenger cars were produced along with another 21,027 Rancheros for the 1960 model year, making it the most successful launch of a new model ever by Ford. So popular was Ford's new compact that it outsold both the Corvair and

Valiant combined.

With a feather in its cap, Ford gave the 1961 Falcon just a minor facelift. A new aluminum grille-convex in place of the first-year car's concave unit-was used while out back Falcon was spelled out in chrome block letters across the rear panel. The Deluxe package now included bright trim to outline the side cove and a stylized Falcon emblem in gold anodized aluminum was placed by the series script on the front fender.

The biggest news in 1961 was the addition of a larger version of the Falcon six. Marketed as the "Special Six," the original engine was redesigned, with the stroke lengthened to 2.94 inches for a displacement of 170 cubic inches and a rating of 101 bhp. (Interestingly, the original 144-cid engine was now downrated to 85 hp,



though there were no differences in any of the published specifications.) Performance gains were dramatic. It took Motor Trend testers 21 seconds to get a 1960 Falcon with the three-speed stick to 60 mph from a standing start; the new engine did the job in 14.3 seconds (15.2 with automatic transmission).

Exterior color choices expanded to 12 solids and 14 extra-cost two-tone combinations. For base sedans, gray vinyl with nylon cloth was standard, while a durable brown vinyl with "Western" -pattern (often referred to as "Steerhead") inserts were used in the station wagons. However, all-vinyl color-keyed trims for the wagons and the vinyl-cloth trims in the sedans were popular options.

The base Falcon was still what Robert McNamara had envisioned: economical transportation for the masses and a

reasonable profit for the company. However, his duties were escalating at Ford where, in late 1960, he was promoted to company president. (A few months later he left the company to serve as Secretary of Defense in the newly inaugurated Kennedy Administration.) In the wake of McNamara's promotion, a sales and marketing man known for flamboyant demonstrations and aggressive marketing skills stepped in as vice president and general manager of the Ford Division. Among his first moves was an upgrading of the Falcon. His name was Lee Iacocca.

Along with the economy imports, the influence of sports cars was also beginning to have an effect on American car buyers. Prominent among their features, thought Iacocca, were front bucket seats. Chevrolet had already used this formula for the '60 Corvair Monza, which garnered almost 12,000 orders despite making its debut at the very tail end of the model year. Thus was born the Falcon Futura in the spring of 1961.

A variation on the two-door sedan, the new model's lavish touches were inspired by Ford's personal-luxury car, the Thunderbird. Futura offered its buyers such amenities as wall-to-wall carpeting, deluxe door-mounted armrests, and a center storage console between front bucket seats with a rear seat trimmed in full vinyl in a choice of five colors. Motor Trend found the Futura's flat-folding front passenger seat a welcome touch: "As on the Thunderbird, this back is designed to fold all the way down to the front cushion. It's a great help for those climbing in and ... it makes the Futura the two-door compact with the easiest back-seat accessibility."

On the outside, Futura received all of the Deluxe package features (save the bodyside trim), plus three diecast chrome "bullets" on each rear quarter panel, "vented" full wheel covers, and optional narrow-band whitewalls. Despite its late arrival and a \$248 price premium over a standard two-door, Futura still sold 44,470 units-nearly 23 percent of all Falcon two-door sedans produced for '61.

Joining Falcon's commercial fleet in 1961 was an all-new sedan delivery. Like the Ranchero, it was based on the two-door station wagon body, even to the extent that it had a station-wagon tailgate with a retracting rear window.

Falcon began one of the most successful automobile marketing campaigns ever with its tie to the characters from Charles Schulz's "Peanuts" comic strip. Just



that name alone would signify thrift. One of this writer's favorites from the campaign had Charlie Brown asking piano prodigy Schroeder if he knew that the Futura was the baby cousin of Thunderbird. Sitting at his keyboard, the young maestro replied, "No, but if you whistle a few of bars, I'll fake it." Production demands dictated more facilities for the Falcon. The Atlanta, Georgia, assembly plant was added to those making the Ford compact. Production for the 1961 model year rose to 474,241 units, plus an additional 22,925 Rancheros and sedan deliveries.

The introduction of the 1962 Falcons brought slight revisions in the sheetmetal, expanded model offerings, and even more options, thanks in part to Lee Iacocca's wish for a bigger share of the market. Engine choices remained unaltered, but dealer-installed Polar-Aire air conditioning was available for those can equipped with the Special Six.

There was a new hood design with simulated hood scoop capped by a chromed "intake." Front fenders took on new contours to match the all-new "electric-shaver" grille featuring a vertical bar theme in stamped aluminum. Parking lights moved down into the bumper and the fender-side logo was redesigned to underscore the series script. Falcons with Deluxe trim had more flash than before. In addition to the bright metal window surrounds

and multiple color and material choices for the interior, ribbed anodized aluminum "washboard" trim was placed on the lower quarters behind the rear wheel openings, a la earlier Galaxies.

Technically there were five Falcon station wagons in 1962, two- and four-doors offered in base and Deluxe forms, plus the Falcon Squire. Like its big brother, the Country Squire, fiberglass edging decorated to simulate wood surrounded the side insert where dark mahogany-grained Di-Noc appliqué completed the effect on the sharpest-looking wagon in the compact field. While the all-vinyl "Western" seat coverings were the only choice for standard models, Deluxes and Squires both offered three all-vinyl selections and one of vinyl and woven plastic.

Futura returned as an independent model rather than an option package. Promoted as being "the happiest, most spirited 'going' among compacts," its most obvious change at introduction time was new side trim with dummy louvers in exchange for 1961's three "bullets." Then came the spring and, with it, a totally new roofline for the Futura. Featuring a squared-off, formal design (which could be covered in vinyl at extra cost), it continued to draw the Falcon closer to its Thunderbird heritage. The wheel cover design was also changed, and an optional four-speed floor-shift transmission—built

1.2. Italian coachbuilder Ghia interpreted the Falcon in its own distinctive way in spring 1964 when it issued the "Clan," a hatchback coupe. 3. Somewhat less radical was the restyling Ford itself gave to the Falcon for '64. This Sprint hardtop (with later-style wheels) shows off the more angular lines. (Owners: Vic and Cathy Falcone) 4. Wheelbase remained 109.5 inches, but the re-skinning led to increased exterior dimensions. Sprint convertible production slipped slightly to 4278. (Owner: Daniel Mitchell) 5. The Futura four-door sedan took over as the most popular Falcon model in '64 with a production run of 38,032. 6. Ford's car-based pickup continued on the Falcon platform. It faced a new rival from Chevrolet.



1. With the Mustang on the loose starting in April '64, calls for sporty Falcons tailed off. Futura convertible orders fell to just 13,220, plus another 2980 Sports versions. 2. A totally new dash design was instituted for '64. Air conditioning was an option. 3. The 260-cid Challenger V-8 still made 164 bhp. (Owner: Gregory Gates) 4. Sprints returned to the rally circuit, thriving at Monte Carlo.



by Ford of England—joined the Futura options list. Still, Futura orders tapered off to just barely 17,000.

Overall Falcon sales dropped to 396,129, plus another 22,410 commercial vehicles. A major reason was the release of a new midsize Fairlane series. Using construction techniques, design elements, and drivetrain components from the Falcon, the Fairlane appealed to car buyers looking for just a little more room than in a compact, while staying away from the big cars.

There was new external competition, too. Chevrolet introduced a second compact, the Chevy II, a much more conventional car than the Corvair, intended to face the Falcon head on. Then, too, Falcon prices shot up. The '61 models topped the introductory cars by literally a couple dollars, but for '62, the price of the base two-door sedan jumped to \$1985, while the four-door hit \$2047—both of which represented \$71 increases.

The Ford Division embraced a new marketing direction in 1963, one that would affect all of its offerings. Even the Falcon, initially bred for simplicity and economy, would come to be part of a top-to-bottom emphasis on performance.

Falcon entered the model year, predictably enough, with a new grille design and some updated trim inside

and out. The instrument cluster received a major makeover. The sweep speedometer remained with the fuel and temperature gauges on either side, but the new stylized plastic fascia had something of a Galaxie look to it.

More surprising, however, was a new body style, a convertible. Available as a Futura with a selection of five all-vinyl trims, this new model could be ordered with bench seats or in a "Sports" edition with bucket seats. Equipped with a power top and the 170-cid Challenger Six as standard, its \$2470 starting price was exceeded only by the Squire wagon in the Falcon family.

Fleet and economy buyers could still opt for base Falcons available in the original four body styles, the prices of which remained the same as in 1962. Basic Falcons were still offered in two trim levels, standard and Deluxe, however the latter's interior selections were now limited to red or blue vinyl-and-cloth choices. One reason the entry-level models were being downplayed was the expansion of the Futura, now considered a sub-series with distinct model codes. Five cloth-and-vinyl upholstery colors were offered, keyed to the exterior paint. Unlike previous Futuras, not all models came with bucket seats. As on the convertible, two-door sedan buyers could choose one with

a bench seat or buckets-and-console Sports version. The new Futura four-door sedan came only with the bench.

Station wagons still made up a good portion of the Falcon market. The star this year continued to be the Squire. Falcon's top-line wagon for 1963 was offered with full vinyl seating in a choice of bench or bucket seats with center console. The Sports Squire hit new price heights for a Falcon at \$2724. The four-speed manual transmission was a new wagon option.

The impulse to go upmarket even extended to the commercial models. Deluxe trim was an \$86 option for the Ranchero and sedan delivery. (Just 113 examples of dressed-up sedan deliveries were recorded.)

Midseason model introduction time in early 1963 brought some true excitement to the Falcon line. A new hardtop coupe was offered as a stablemate to the Futura convertible. Naturally; there was a choice of bench seats or—for a little more pizzazz—a pair of bucket seats in the Sports edition.

Then, too, a small-block V-8 came to the Falcon platform. Using thin-wall casting, this now proven and respected engine (it debuted in Fairlanes and similar Mercury Meteors) had been taken to 260 cid and was rated at 164 bhp. Known as the Challenger V-8, it was the same engine that Carroll Shelby was stuffing into the little AC Ace roadsters that he called Cobras. At \$196.30, the 260 V-8 was the most bang for the buck among U.S. compacts.

To make it even more tempting, a special Sprint package was put on the table. Available as a hardtop and convertible the starting point for these cars was the Futura Sports package to which was added the V-8. The two-barrel carburetor was topped by the air cleaner from the big Ford

1.2. Station wagon choices contracted somewhat for 1964. The Deluxe, identifiable by its full-length side spear, was now offered only as a four-door. 3. The year's redesign boosted cargo capacity to a possible 90 cubic feet. 4. Deluxes had a much plainer dash than did Futuras. (Owner: Leo Iniguez)



390-cid "Police Interceptor" V-8; it provided ample air flow—and what Ford described as a "power hum." A chrome dress-up kit for the valve covers, air cleaner, radiator and oil filler caps and oil dipstick

reflected all that power. At the end was a "throaty" muffler. A stiffer suspension, larger brakes, and five-lug wheels (which replaced four-lug units on any V-8 equipped Falcon) were installed. A three-speed stick



1



2



3

1965 Falcons sported a new divided grille and revised trim on the sides and decklid. 1.2.3. A mere 3106 Sprints were produced—just 300 of which were convertibles. Though still sporty looking, Sprint interiors lost some of their formerly standard features. (Owner: Dan Armstrong)

contours gave way to a boxier body, sharper definition of the dartlike side cove, and an angular rear deck treatment. Up front, the use of dual headlights continued, with a handsome stamped aluminum grille in which horizontal bar sections appeared to float. The rear design still featured large, round taillights. The word “Falcon” was spelled out across the decklid’s face in chromed block letters.

The dashboard also had a completely new look. A flat-topped dash panel replaced the twin-hump style employed in 1960–63. A wide strip-type speedometer was flanked by fuel and temperature gauges. Below the speedometer sat warning lights for oil pressure and generator function. Lever-type controls now operated the heater and ventilation system.

As much as the physical appearance of the Falcon had changed for 1964, model offerings stayed almost as they had been. The base Falcon still came in its same four sedan and station wagon styles. The step up was the Deluxe, this year considered a separate subseries. It no longer came as a two-door station wagon, however. Upholstery in base-model sedans was tan vinyl with woven nylon cloth inserts; Deluxes came in red or blue.

Futura returned with all its body styles from ‘63. Four color-keyed interiors were offered to those wanting to ride in a bit more luxury for the sedans. Hardtop and convertible

transmission came standard, but could be replaced by Fordomatic or a Borg-Warner T-10 four-speed gearbox encased in aluminum. Also included in the Sprint package were a dashboard-mounted tachometer; deep-dished, sports-style steering wheel (a little too deep-dished for some automotive writers’ tastes); simulated knock-off wire wheel covers; and identifying scripts on the front fenders.

Though it wouldn’t embarrass a Super/Stock terror of the day; the V-8 did wonders for Falcon acceleration. Car and Driver’s test of a four-speed Sprint convertible at the Ford Proving Grounds yielded “0-to-60 in less than 11 seconds consistently; and quarter-mile times were right in the high seventeens and low eighteens.” Several specially prepared Sprints

were sent to Europe to contest the Monte Carlo Rally. When the results were in, Falcon had proven itself to be a world-leader, something the other compacts from America were never able to do.

Though model and equipment choices were expanding, Falcon production was not. Output was down to 328,339 passenger cars and 19,571 Rancheros and sedan deliveries.

After four years, Falcon received a major facelift for the 1964 model year, one that was smart and up-to-date inside and out. The new package dimensions were kept as close as possible to the original theme. Overall length expanded to 181.6 inches (190 on wagons) and Falcon grew a little wider to 71.6 inches. Weight increased, too, by about 65 pounds. Falcon’s soft edges and rounded



1,2,3. Vastly more popular—relatively speaking—was the Futura convertible. Still, with 6315 built in all forms, it was doomed to be discontinued. (Owner: Dan Armstrong) 4. Another style destined to disappear after '65 was the two-door hardtop. This Futura is equipped with the 289-cid V-8 that replaced the 260. (Owners: John and Kathy Lerner) 5. The base four-door sedan, a \$2082 car, saw increased orders. (Owner: John Verbas)

buyers could opt for the Sports edition with bucket seats and all-vinyl upholstery in five color-coordinated choices. Convertible tops were available in black, white, and light blue. Both Sprints came back, too, with virtually no change in formula.

The revisions paid added dividends to the station wagons, giving them up to 90 cubic feet of load space. The top-line Squire continued with its pseudo-wood trim, which conformed to the reshaped side cove. Commercial vehicles shared in the redesign, too. The sedan delivery continued in base and Deluxe trim, while the Ranchero could be had in base, Deluxe, or Deluxe Sport, the last with vinyl, color-keyed bucket seats—an option that saw just 235 orders.

Powering Falcons in 1964 was a mixed lot that had to keep those on the production lines on their toes. All models except the Futura convertible and Sprints received the 144-cid six (still rated at 85 bhp). Standard on the ragtop and optional on all except Sprints was the Special Six with 170 cubic inches and 101 horses. (This was actually the recommended engine for all station wagons, even though it was considered an option.) New for 1964 was a 200-cid “Special Six” first used in Fairlanes, a 116-bhp engine optionally available in Falcon station wagons and commercials.

Details of the Challenger V-8 (or Sprint V-8, as the engine was known when applied to the sportiest Falcons) were unchanged. So, too, were the transmission choices. Power brakes were new to the options list, though.

Despite the new looks and restrained prices, Falcon production took another hit in 1964, dropping to 300,770, with another 18,190 commercial vehicles. Certainly contributing to these lower numbers was another new Ford product that was released in April 1964: Mustang. Ford’s “ponycar” would rapidly stake out the sports compact territory for itself and redefine the role of the Falcon, from which it was derived.

For 1965, Falcon seemed to be returning to its original role as Ford’s entry level economy car. Cost-cutting was evident even

in the top-line Sprint and Futuras with the Sport package, where the front center-storage console became a separate option from the bucket seats. Styling changes consisted of little more than a new grille design and side trim updates. Similarly minor modifications took place on the inside with new plastic fascia used around the instrument cluster and radio surround. On the technical side, alternators replaced generators to keep Falcons' 12-volt electrical systems charged.

Model offerings picked up where they left off in '64. This would be the final season for the Sprint, though, as the Mustang had really cut into its market. However, those who did step up to one of these very limited-production vehicles (2806 hardtops and 300 convertibles) got more standard punch than in any prior Falcon with a new 289-cid, 200-bhp V-8.

Actually, available power was up throughout the line. The 144-cid six was gone, replaced as the standard power-plant by the 170-cube job, which got a compression-ratio nudge to 9.1:1 and a boost in horsepower to 105. The optional 200-cid six, now offered in everything but the Sprint, crept up to 120 bhp. Then, too, those same models could be had with the Challenger 289 V-8, a \$153 option. A three-speed manual gearbox was also included in the base price of all models. Improved transmission options included a Ford-built four-speed stick for V-8 cars and the new C-4 Cruise-O-Matic three-speed automatic, available across the board. With two drive positions and added smoothness, the automatic was the most popular transmission in '65 Falcons.

Overall, production dropped substantially for 1965 to 213,601, though Ranchero and sedan delivery orders moved up a bit to 20,040 units. At last, the original Falcon had run its course. A totally re-engineered Falcon would arrive for 1966, but in many ways it would mark a return to the little car's original mission. A new day was dawning for Ford's compact.

Special thanks to Billy Pope (FCA # 14436) for sending us this informative article. This should get us all knowledgeable and ready for Nationals. Being able to identify and talk about the uniqueness of each model makes meets so much more interesting. Now, who can send us one for '66 to '70 model Falcons?

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CLASSIFIEDS

FALCONS FOR SALE



1962 Falcon Futura Convertible with 170 engine. Car was bought new by my grandfather for my grandmother. Car was restored to original interior and exterior colors in 2000. Car runs well with very good interior and body in good shape but needing some repair work. Asking \$15,000. Mark Mirage, mdmirage@hotmail.com. PA. 230406



1965 Ford Falcon Sedan Delivery. 302 four-speed, black interior, power rear window. Pete Eck, peck0549@yahoo.com. 230316



1964 Falcon Futura Two-Door Hardtop. Must sell my project Pro Street Touring car I started to build due to health issues. Car is back half and tubed with a narrowed Strange 9" and 4.56 posi-trac. Wilwood disc brakes and master cylinder, four Center Line rims, two engines (one is a late model 302, second is a 1964½ 289, five-bolt, rebuilt C4 trans. Car was being prepped for paint when I was forced to stop working on it. I have over \$17,000 invested, but will sell for \$7,500. Earl Jones, 405-364-1617. OK 230123



1964 Villager, Comet wagon original 289 four-barrel, automatic transmission. Has original doors, all fiberglass wood railings, all emblems/trim and interior parts. No title, \$1,900 without engine/trans; with engine/trans \$2,900. 1965 Caliente, two-door Comet hardtop six-cyl automatic (no engine no transmission). Has nice rust free quarters, rust in floors. Title, \$1,200. More projects 1963 Meteor, 1964 Comet. Carlos Vera, call/text 720-281-0940, calicometcarlos@yahoo.com. CO. 230225

PARTS FOR SALE

ALL NOS C0DZ-3047-A, upper control arm shaft kit, \$65. C0DZ-3350-B, steering arm and bushing, \$95. C0DZ-3049-A, upper ball joint spindle support, \$65. C0DZ-2128-A, wheel cylinder repair kit, \$5. C0DF-13304-A, turn signal plate, \$30. C0DZ-13341-A, turn signal switch, \$75. C0DZ-1126-B, rear brake drum, \$130. C0DF-12370-A, Autolite vacuum control, \$36. Much more. Keith Litteken, 314-480-2556 or kslitteken@aol.com. MO. 230226

Four 1963 Sport 13" wire hubcaps. Very good driver condition quality. \$100 for set of four. Jim, Minneapolis, MN area. 763-559-6380. 230310

FREE! I have four original 13-inch wheels with good tires on them and original hubcaps from my '62. They are free for anyone who needs and wants them. Contact mollym@sffatc.com. San Francisco area. 230318



Parting '60-'65 Falcons. 15 year collection! Good sheet metal, lots of trim, mechanical parts, etc. Thanx for driving a Falcon! Call Steve, 360-430-0143. WA. 230309

Barn Find: one old -time fiberglass hoods w/ scoops: 1964-65 Falcon/Ranchero hood w/a raised hood scoop molded in; found in the barn of a Colorado drag racer; used at Bandimere Speedway in the 80s-90s. \$250 OBO. Almost impossible to ship this item, so I highly suggest local pickup. Call or email Lenny Kellogg at Kellogg's Garage: lenkellogg1964@gmail.com, 970-593-1964, or visit us at www.kelloggarage.com. CO. 230417



Parting out 1964 Falcon four-door and Ranchero. Parting out 1964/65 Comet parts cars, hardtop, convertible, wagon. Carlos Vera, call/text 720-281-0940, calicometcarlos@yahoo.com. CO. 230225

1960-67 Falcon Wagon/Sedan Delivery tailgate cranks w/ keys, single action gate, good used to NOS: \$195 to \$695; '66-70 Sport Coupe Vinyl top trim, two pieces, rare, good driver quality, \$125 for the set; (2) sets of Hardtop Bucket Seats: (1) pair 1963 w/Futura/Sprint style upholstery, very nice driver quality; complete except for one seat emblem; \$1395. 1964-65 pair of hardtop bucket seats, driver quality, nice dark red upholstery, needs minor work to bolt in and drive, \$1295. 1963 Dagenham four-speed, complete w/shifter/linkage/handle/mount; road tested, working well, \$695. Parts available to make the Dagenham trans a conversion as well; please inquire. 1963-64 Hypo 289 Fairlane exhaust manifolds pair; mint condition; \$600. Four-speed floor shift steering column covers (3) 1960-65; \$200-250 each. Four-speed steering column "blank" shifter collar, \$100. '60-63 Falcon sedan "No-Mar" gas tank guard (2) and NOS stainless steel gas cap (1), in original packaging, rare accessories, \$295 for the set. '61-65 Econoline Horn Buttons, (2) \$30-50; '64-65 Falcon horn buttons, nice chrome, \$25-50 each; '63 taillight lens, one w/ back-up—Glo-Brite—NORS, \$35 w/box; NOS 1963 back-up light kit, mint; \$350. 1964 NOS back up light kit, mint, \$350. Nice Used 1965 taillight lens, all four styles, \$150-\$200 per pair. NOS Falcon parklight lens, pairs, 1960: \$40, 1962-63: clear, \$40, amber, \$25, 1966/67, \$75. 1964 Futura Horn rings: driver quality to very nice: \$60-\$175. 1964 NOS taillight lens, no backups, \$95 a pair; w/back-ups \$200 per pair. 1970½ Falcon dash cluster complete, \$100, shows 28K miles; 1960-61 Comet dash clusters, two to choose from, very nice chrome, \$250 each; 1963 Comet Dash cluster, needs work, but complete/working, \$125; '62-63 Futura 13" wheel covers, \$40-\$100 per set. 1962 Futura front fender spears, good driver quality chrome, \$175-\$300 per pair. 1963 Mid-Model/Custom (NOT Futura) front fender spears, three sets of good-very good driver quality, \$100-\$200 per set. (2) sets 1963 Futura/Sprint fender spears, really nice survivors, \$450 each pair. 1963 Futura/Sprint door/quarter panel stainless trim, very straight; \$150-\$250 each, and can make a set of four as well. Nearly New six-cylinder header set, fits a 1966-70 engine bay, \$195. Four bbl. manifolds OEM Ford, C6OE, \$125 (2), C4OE \$395. '64-5 Squire trim: four complete doors, two complete quarter panel trim,

one RF fender trim, one excellent steel Squire fender; no tailgate trim, \$450 for all. 1960-61 strut rods, good threads, clean, \$195 a pair; 1960 early air cleaners (2) w/ lid for a paper element, needs restored but rare, \$125; 1960 driver's side early "air box" attaches w/four screws, not the "J" hooks, clean, good door/hinge, \$100. 1960-62 electric wiper conversions; replace the vacuum wipers; complete motor/armatures/wiring, \$250. Three Holley carbs on an Offenhauser intake manifold with linkage and chrome air cleaners, \$750.00. Body Parts: '60-70½ doors, fenders, hoods, trunk lids for Falcon 2dr/4dr, hardtop top, convertible; what do you need? \$150-\$495 each. 1965 hardtop driver's side quarter panel survivor, rough, not rusted through, but complete quarter the car; \$500, come get it. We have a 35+ year collection of Falcon and Comet parts; please call/email with your needs. Call or email Len Kellogg at Kellogg's Garage: lenkellogg1964@gmail or 970-593-1964, or visit us at www.kelloggsgarage.com. CO. 230417

PARTS WANTED

1963 Falcon Delux two-door wagon parts. They must be in excellent condition, either NOS or used: front and rear bumper, grille, h/l doors, parklamp/signal assemblies, hood chrome, side trim, bucket seats, tailgate, power and or manual tailgate window parts, tailgate springs hinges, etc. Keith Litteken, 6274 Rocky Grove, Cedar Hill, MO 63016; 314-480-2556 or kslitteken@aol.com. 230226

MISCELLANEOUS

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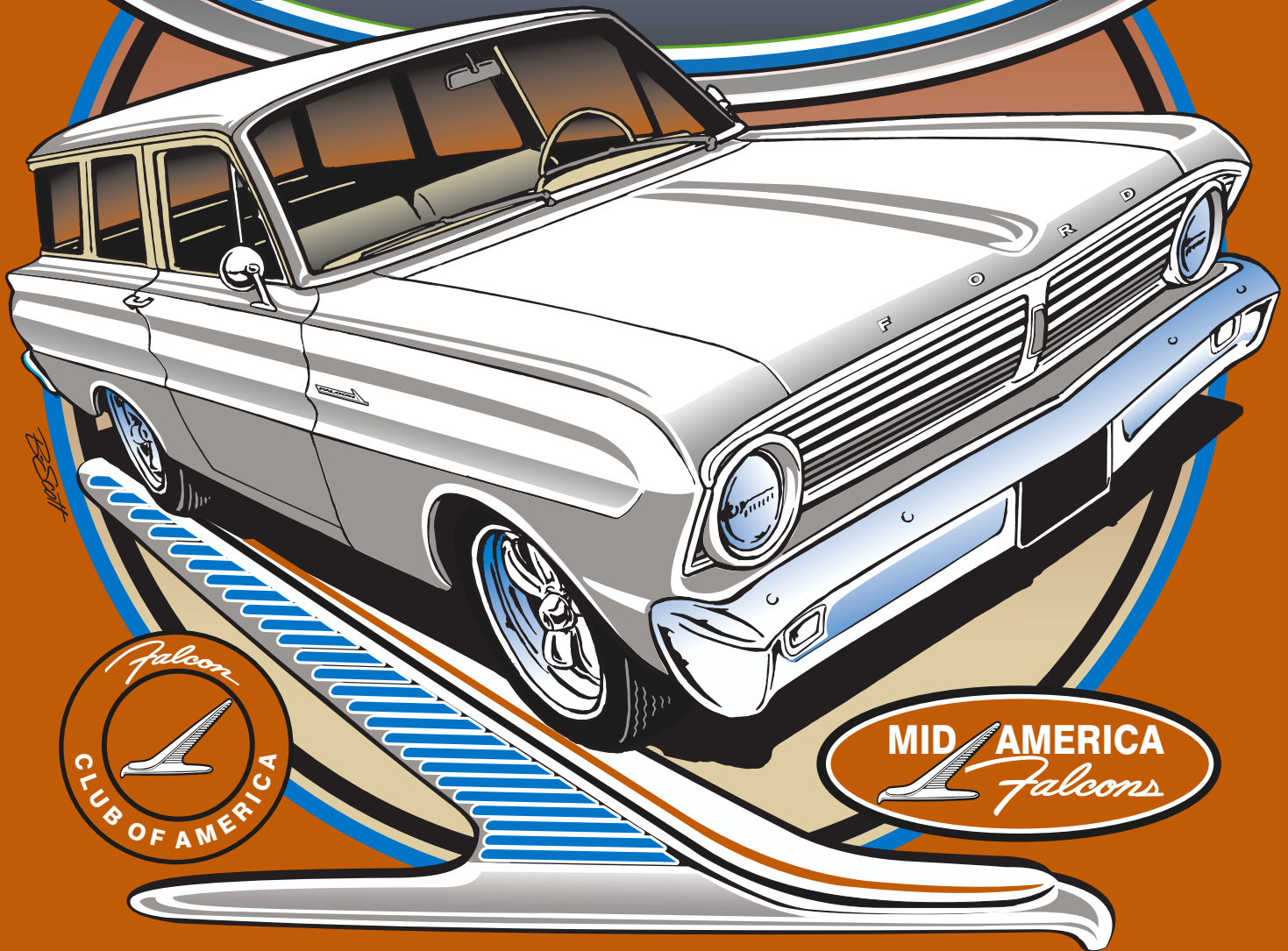
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